THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) Unbridled private development of hill stations and tourist resorts would have some impact on the ecology of the Western Ghat region in Maharashtra but no specific information is available regarding any damage being caused to the flora and fauna of the region. Regulations regarding construction activities are expected to limit adverse impact on the environment.

Incidents of Forest Fire

2818. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of forest fire incidents in the country during the last one year, state-wise;

(b) the loss of casualities, number of wild animals parished and seedings, young trees and grass destroyed by these forest fires; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to prevent these forest fires in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected from the State Governments and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) The Government has taken following initiatives to prevent forest fire in future:

1. State Governments have been advised to involve Forest Protection Committees under Joint Forest Management Programme to control this problem.

2. A Scheme Modern Forest Fire Control Methods is being implemented in eleven States of the country under which assistance is provided to the states for prevention, detection and control of forest fires. During Ninth Five Year Plan under the scheme Modern Forest Fire Control Methods an outlay of Rs. 15 crores has been provided.

Pollution in Metro cities

2819. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the level of air pollution by motor vehicles, three/two wheelers in Delhi, where more than 20 lakh vehicles are on roads, which number is more than the total number of vehicles plying in Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai;

(b) the number of industrial units in Delhi, Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai, the volume of waste water, air and sound pollution generated by each separately;

(c) sound pollution created by the Barat Processions and various religious functions using uninterrupted microphones even in night, each city separately; and

(d) sound pollution created by the flights in and around aerodromes, each city separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. About 60 to 70% of air pollution is due to the vehicular emissions.

(b) to (d) No such specific data is available. However, the noise pollution surveys conducted by Central Pollution Control Board, in the major Indian cities reveal that there is an increasing trend of noise in the residential areas and silence zones which is mainly due to increased vehicular traffic.